

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5603
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTIAGO 5678

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV PINT SHUM CI
SUBJECT: PINOCHET'S SPEECH TO CHILEAN YOUTH

REF:STATE 160510, STATE 160511

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT PINOCHET'S JULY 9 SPEECH REPRESENTS
SIGNIFICANT POLICY DEPARTURES. HE HAS DESCRIBED A PLAN WHICH
TRANSFERS POWER TO CIVILIANS, ENDS MILITARY RULE, GIVES THE
ARMED FORCES A WATCHING BRIEF AS GUARANTORS OF THE NEW INSTI-
TUTIONALITY, AND SETS FINITE TIMEFRAMES FOR EACH STEP. THE
FORM AND TIMING ARE NOT AS IMPORTANT AS THE FACT THAT A PLAN
HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC. THESE NEW MEASURES REFLECT IN DESCEND-
ING ORDER OF IMPORTANCE PINOCHET'S ANSWER TO PRESSURES WITHIN
THE JUNTA FOR CURTAILMENT OF HIS PERSONAL ROLE, PRESSURES WITHIN
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THE MILITARY FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM ACTIVE POLITICAL LIFE, CIVILIAN
PRESSURES FOR PROGRESS TOWARD THE LONG-HERALDED NEW
INSTITUTIONALITY AND TOWARD MORE CIVILIAN PARTICIPATION,
AND INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE FOR A MORE OPEN CHILEAN
REGIME. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT, PRESIDENT PINOCHET'S

SPEECH PRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT POLICY DEPARTURE. HE HAS DESCRIBED A PLAN WHICH TRANSFERS POWER TO CIVILIANS, ENDS FORMAL MILITARY RULE, AND SETS FINITE PERIODS FOR EACH STEP. THE DEADLINES GIVE NO SENSE OF HASTE AND DEPEND UPON PINOCHET'S JUDGMENT THAT CONDITIONS REMAIN PROPITIOUS; COMPLETION OF INTERIM CONSTITUTIONAL ACTS BY DECEMBER 31, 1980 (MORE PRECISE THAN THE WASHINGTON VERSION WHICH SAID THIS STEP WOULD BE COMPLETED BY "1979-80"); ESTABLISHMENT OF AN APPOINTED LEGISLATIVE BODY DURING 1980 TO SERVE A FOUR-FIVE YEAR TERM BEGINNING IN 1981; ELECTIONS FOR TWO-THIRDS ITS MEMBERS BETWEEN 1984-86; DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRAL NEW CONSTITUTION TO BE PRESENTED TO THIS NEWLY CHOSEN LEGISLATURE FOR ADOPTION AND PROMULGATION; AND DESIGNATION BY THE NEW LEGISLATURE OF A PRESIDENT TO SERVE A SIX-YEAR TERM.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE RECUPERATIVE AND TRANSITIONAL STAGES SEEMS TO REPRESENT A COMPROMISE BETWEEN PINOCHET'S POWERS AND THOSE OF THE REST OF THE JUNTA. THE PRESIDENT REMAINS PROMINENT WHILE THE JUNTA KEEPS SIGNIFICANT POWERS. THE JUNTA MEMBERS CAN INITIATE SOME TYPES (NOT SPELLED OUT) OF LEGISLATION AND EACH MEMBER OF THE JUNTA WOULD HAVE AN ABSOLUTE VETO OVER ANY PROPOSED LEGISLATION. IT WILL RETAIN THE CONSTITUENT POWER ALTHOUGH THE COUNCIL OF STATE MUST BE CONSULTED BEFORE ENACTMENT. THE JUNTA WILL DESIGNATE TWO-THIRDS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERIM

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LEGISLATURE (1981-85). FINALLY, AT THE END OF THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS THE MILITARY AS AN INSTITUTION RETAINS A PERMANENT WATCHING BRIEF OVER THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE NEW INSTITUTIONALITY.

4. THE POWER DIVISION BETWEEN PRESIDENT PINOCHET AND THE JUNTA REFLECTS TENSIONS WHICH DEVELOPED WITHIN THE JUNTA AS A RESULT OF PINOCHET'S FEBRUARY ULTIMATUM TO HIS COLLEAGUES TO APPROVE OF SUBSTANTIALLY EXPANDED EXECUTIVE POWER--POWERS TO BE WOVEN INTO A NEW CONSTITUTIONAL ACT (PARA 6 BELOW). PINOCHET IS TELLING THE MILITARY THAT HE DOES NOT PLAN TO RULE INDEFINITELY, THAT THE OTHER SERVICES WILL RETAIN VETO RIGHTS ON LEGISLATION AND CONSTITUENT ACTS AND HAVE A CUT OF THE PIE IN SETTING UP THE NEW LEGISLATURE--ALL PRESUMABLY IMPORTANT RESTRICTIONS ON EXECUTIVE POWERS. PINOCHET IS ALSO RESPONDING TO VARIED INTERNAL PRESSURES TO "GET ON WITH IT," I.E., PULL THE MILITARY INSTITUTIONS OUT OF ACTIVE POLITICAL LIFE AND BUILD THE "NEW INSTITUTIONALITY."

5. THE STRUCTURE OUTLINED IN THE SPEECH REPRESENTS

NOTHING NEW ON THE IDEOLOGICAL FRONT. THIS IS THE TYPE SYSTEM THE MILITARY HAVE BEEN PROMISING CHILE SINCE SHORTLY AFTER THE COUP: A STRONG EXECUTIVE, EFFECTIVE ELIMINATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, FUNCTIONAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE BODY. THUS PINOCHET ENVISAGES PROCEDURES TO KEEP POLITICKING OUT OF THE LEGISLATURE AND TO ENSURE THAT ONLY "QUALIFIED" PEOPLE STAND FOR ELECTION. AS THE PRESIDENT AND JUNTA HAVE BEEN SAYING, CHILE'S NEW DEMOCRACY WILL BEAR LITTLE RESEMBLANCE TO THE "NAIVE" CLASSICAL LIBERAL STATE.

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6. THE TIMING: WHY NOW? PRESSURES HAVE BEEN BUILDING WITHIN THE MILITARY AND THE CONSERVATIVE ESTABLISHMENT FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS. ONE OF LAST SEPTEMBER'S CONSTITUTIONAL ACTS SET A ONE-YEAR DEADLINE TO CONSOLIDATE THE EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE AND CONSTITUENT POWERS AS THEY HAD DEVELOPED UNDER THE JUNTA. PINOCHET'S WISH TO MEET THIS DEADLINE PROMPTED HIS FEBRUARY ULTIMATUM (PARA 4). WE USE THE ULTIMATUM AS A CONVENIENT BENCHMARK, BUT THE BACKLASH AGAINST BANNING THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND THE HOOLIGANISM OF EARLY MARCH MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN CATALYSTS. A SIMMERING DEBATE WITHIN THE JUNTA SEEPED INTO THE IN-

STITUTIONS THEMSELVES (PARTICULARLY THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY) AND FROM THERE INTO PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS. MERIONO'S VALPARAISO SPEECH MENTIONING ELECTIONS AND SOME OF LEIGH'S STATEMENTS WERE PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS OF THIS
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GROWING DESIRE TO SET LIMITS--LIMITS ON PINOCHET AND LIMITS ON THE TIME THE MILITARY WOULD RUN THE GOVERNMENT.

7. A QUESTION ARISES AS TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE JUNTA TOWARDS PINOCHET'S ANNOUNCEMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, AIR FORCE GENERAL LEIGH COMMENTED TO THE PRESS THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED. PINOCHET'S "PROPOSALS, HE SAID, "WOULD REQUIRE EXHAUSTIVE STUDY BY THE JUNTA, WHICH WIELDS THE CONSTITUENT POWER."

8. ESTABLISHMENT CIVILIANS, SUCH AS JAIME GUZMAN AND ARTURO FONTAINE, URGED THE NEED FOR MOVEMENT ON THE INSTITUTIONAL SIDE. THE MEDIA IN GENERAL USED EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO KEEP AIRING THE ISSUE. EX-CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT CONSERVATIVE JUAN DE DIOS, CARMONA KEPT WRITING ON THE THEME IN A POPULAR WEEKLY. WE JUDGE THAT THESE PRESSURES, HOWEVER, PLAYED A MUCH LESSER ROLE THAN INTERNAL MILITARY COMBUSTION.

9. IN ADDITION, EXTERNAL FACTORS ALSO PROBABLY PLAYED SOME ROLE IN PINOCHET'S DECISION. WE KNOW THAT THE CHILEAN LEADERSHIP WAS INCREASINGLY AWARE THAT THEIR OPEN-ENDED REIGN CONTRASTED UNHAPPILY WITH THE TIME-TABLES APPEARING IN OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN MILITARY RULED COUNTRIES. ANY TIMETABLE WAS BETTER THAN NONE. MORE-OVER, MOVEMENT TOWARD MORE DEMOCRATIC NORMS WOULD OBVIOUSLY PLEASE THE USG AND WESTERN EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES.

10. BEHIND THESE IMMEDIATE PRESSURES ARE A NUMBER OF POSITIVE ELEMENTS, ABSENT WHICH PINOCHET MIGHT WELL NOT HAVE HAD THE CONFIDENCE TO PROPOSE THESE MEASURES. INTERNAL SECURITY IS WELL IN HAND. ECONOMIC RECOVERY IS MANIFEST. AND HE CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A
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DEEP AMBIVALENCE ON THE PART OF THE CHILEAN ELECTORATE WITH REGARD TO THEIR POLITICAL PAST. THE OLD SYSTEM HAD LED TO THE CHAOS OF ALLENDE. A NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM MIGHT AT LEAST BE WORTH A TRY.

11. CLEARLY THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH DOES NOT ADDRESS THE ISSUES WE HAVE TABLED WITH THE GOC: USE OF EMERGENCY POWER (WHICH HE AND OTHER CHILEAN OFFICIALS EQUATE WITH AN END TO THE STATE OF SEIGE AND REPLACEMENT BY A LESSER EMERGENCY REGIME); DUE PROCESS; AND, CURTAILMENT OR ABOLITION OF DINA. IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT PINOCHET MAY USE POLITICAL/INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS TO DELAY REFORMS IN THE INTERNAL SECURITY AREA. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE HE WILL USE HIS SEPTEMBER 11 ANNIVERSARY SPEECH TO ANNOUNCE AMELIORATION OF THE STATE OF SEIGE AND WILL ALSO MOVE SOON TO CURTAIL DINA.

12. CHILEAN POLITICAL EXILES ON THE WASHINGTON/PARIS/ GENEVA CIRCUIT WILL FIND MUCH TO CRITICIZE IN PINOCHET'S PLAN. THE FACT IS, HOWEVER, THAT A MILITARY DICTATOR HAS ANNOUNCED A PLAN SPECIFIC AS TO STRUCTURE AND TIMING DESIGNED TO RETURN THE CIVILIANS TO POLITICAL RULE AND THE MILITARY TO THEIR BARRACKS. IN THIS SENSE PINOCHET UNDENIABLY HAS BROKEN IMPORTANT NEW GROUND. THE PACE OF CHANGE AND/OR THE NEW STRUCTURE ITSELF ARE ALMOST BESIDE THE POINT. BOTH MAY EVOLVE OVER TIME.
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